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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS; U.S. BEEF
IMPORTS

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage January 14 on the 7.0-magnitude earthquake that hit Haiti Tuesday; on Google's threat to quit China Tuesday; and on the year-end five city and county magistrate elections in Taiwan.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" discussed China's testing of its missile defense system Monday and its connection to U.S.-China-Taiwan relations and the Ma administration's cross-Straits policy. The article urged the Ma administration not to keep quiet when it comes to issues concerning Taiwan's sovereignty and the Taiwan-centric awareness. A "China Times" column discussed Secretary Clinton's remarks on U.S.-China relations made during her flight to Asia. The article said U.S.-China relations will surely "go off the rails" because China regards the differences it has with the United States as being about its "core interests." With regard to the U.S. beef issue, an op-ed in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" said the beef debacle will teach President Ma a lesson about "being humble and listen to the voice of the public." End summary.

¶3. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

A) "The Ma Administration Must Not Surrender Its Right of Speech to Others"

Wang Chien-chuang, former president of "China Times," wrote in a column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] (1/14):

"... Chinese officials claimed that its anti-missile test [this time] was not targeting anyone. But judging from the fact that the People's Liberation Army has never publicized its missile tests and yet it was making much ado about it by announcing it to the world this time, it is clear to everyone that the move was aimed at the U.S. arms sales to Taiwan -- a sure move to 'show its sword' in protest [against the U.S. arms sales]. In fact, since Beijing and Washington established diplomatic ties in the 1970s, whenever Washington decided to sell weapons to Taiwan, Chinese officials have always responded to it based on an SOP that has been used for many years, to which Washington has long gotten used to. Yet the extent and intensity of China's reaction this time somehow has kept Washington on its tenterhooks.

"The reasons are that while no one knows yet how the disturbance caused by the U.S. arms sales to Taiwan will end, [U.S. President Barack] Obama will soon meet with the Dalai Lama. Within just one month, Washington will have twice stepped on the red line drawn by China and encroached upon China's core interests. [It appears that] Washington has made it very clear that it does not care about China at all. Even if Hu Jintao can tolerate that, it will be difficult to control the public opinion [in China] which shows mounting nationalist sentiment. Besides, Washington now has a favor to ask of China -- it needs China's assistance on issues like North Korea and Iran, and when it comes to the U.S. economy, the White House has

to look upon China for signs of approval. ...

"A friend of mine recently made a thought-provoking observation: 'The Ma administration said its cross-Strait policy is three No's -- no unification, no independence, and no use of force. But actually it is four No's -- 'no talk' should be added.' No talk about what? [Ma] does not talk about any topics that may enrage China, including the Tiananmen Square massacre, Liu Xiaobo, [Taiwan's] sovereignty, and so on. ... No matter how many weapons Washington will sell Taiwan, it will not change the asymmetrical military buildups on both sides of the Strait. But always responding to [what the other side has to say] is a tool that Taiwan must not give up in the asymmetrical war of 'saying' across the Taiwan Strait. ..."

B) "China-U.S. Differences Will Surely Go off the Rails"

The "International Lookout" column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] wrote (1/14):

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in response to a journalist's enquiry on her flight eastward: 'What I'm expecting is that we actually are having a mature relationship, which will be consistent with the remarks by the two state leaders in their summit about constructing a positive, cooperative and comprehensive relationship. That means that it doesn't go off the rails when we have differences of opinion.' ... But such thinking is totally different from that of China's. In Obama's and Clinton's opinion, these issues are just different in the ways people perceive them, and that both sides can 'seek a common ground while maintaining differences' if they are really interested in working with each other. ...

"However, for China, it is a totally different story. Beijing
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believes that these are all China's 'core interests,' and what Washington does will endanger China's core interests. [For China,] bilateral cooperation must not endanger its core interests, and since national unification is [one of] its core interests, the above-mentioned [differences] have hindered its national unification. ..."

14. U.S. Beef Imports

"Beef Debacle Teaches Ma a Lesson"

DPP Legislator Ker Chien-ming opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (1/14):

"After two months of maneuvers by the ruling and opposition parties, the US beef affair has finally been brought to a close. The passage of a legal amendment banning imports of certain beef products from countries with a history of mad cow disease can be seen as a declaration of a new era of independence for the legislature, and a strong vote of no confidence in President Ma Ying-jeou. Ma must learn to be humble and listen to the voice of the public instead of being blinded by his ever-more-absolute powers. He must realize that the US beef issue, and that of the proposed cross-strait economic cooperation framework agreement (ECFA), have at least symbolic implications for Taiwan's sovereignty, and we cannot allow that to be compromised through deals behind closed doors. The US beef affair should be a revelation for the Ma administration as it proceeds with preparations for an ECFA."

STANTON